

Message Text

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14

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

DPW-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 RSR-01 /096 W

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R 120821Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8846

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS SEOUL 4512

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, KS, KN

SUBJ: RED CROSS TALKS

REF: SEOUL 4438

1. ROK NEWS MEDIA JULY 12 PROMINENTLY REPORTED PROPOSAL OUTLINED IN DINNER SPEECH BY KOREAN NATIONAL RED CROSS CHIEF DELEGATE YI POM-SOK TO PERMIT RELATIVES TO TRAVEL TO SOUTH AND NORTH TO VISIT ANCESTORS' GRAVES ON SEPTEMBER 11, CHUSOK HARVEST FESTIVAL. URGING THE NORTH TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL, YI REPORTEDLY SAID IT WOULD PROVIDE A FOUNDATION FOR MUTUAL TRUST AND MARK A TURNING POINT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN SOUTH AND NORTH.

2. WE DO NOT YET KNOW HOW NORTH KOREANS RESPONDED TO PROPOSAL WITHIN CLOSED DOOR TALKS. ROK MEDIA QUOTED NORTH KOREAN JOURNALIST AS SAYING "IT IS A GOOD PROPOSAL, BUT PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT MUST BE SOLVED FIRST." PYONGYANG MEDIA HAVE NOT MENTIONED KNRC PROPOSAL THUS FAR, FOCUSING INSTEAD ON NORTH'S EFFORTS TO PROMOTE FATHERLAND REUNIFICATION. NORTH KOREAN RED CROSS CHAIRMAN SON SONG-PILL IN HIS DINNER SPEECH PRIOR TO YI EMPHASIZED NORTH KOREAN

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DEMANDS FOR CREATING "DEMOCRATIC CONDITIONS" AND ENDING

MILITARY CONFRONTATION AS PREREQUISITES TO PROGRESS IN RED CROSS TALKS.

3. TALKS MET FOR LESS THAN AN HOUR JULY 11 AND AGAIN FOR ONE HOUR THIRTY MINUTES JULY 12. AFTER FIRST DAY, SOUTH'S SPOKESMAN SAID THAT KNRC HAD OFFERED NEW PROPOSAL TO MAKE A TURNING POINT IN THE TALKS. THERE HAVE BEEN NO OTHER COMMENTS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TALKS. DINNER HOSTED BY COORDINATING COMMITTEE ACTING CO-CHAIRMAN PAK SONG-CH'OL IS SCHEDULED JULY 12. GROUP WILL RETURN TO SEOUL JULY 13.

4. ROK MEDIA DESCRIPTIONS OF PYONGYANG ENVIRONMENT HAVE DEPICTED IT AS MORE RELAXED THAN LAST TIME ROK GROUP VISITED. MORE PEOPLE WERE SEEN ALONG THE STREET AND SOME CHILDREN EVEN WAVED. ON THE OTHER HAND, NORTH KOREAN RED CROSS CHAIRMAN'S DINNER SPEECH WAS DESCRIBED AS "POLITICAL PROPAGANDA."
HABIB

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SEOUL04512
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730737/aaaabbiv.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 SEOUL 4438
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17-Jan-2002 by phillir0>; APPROVED <05-Feb-2002 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RED CROSS TALKS
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, KS, KN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005